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Academic identity, parental socialization and teacher support of charter school Latinx adolescents

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Academic Identity, parental socialization, and teacher support of charter school Latinx adolescents

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Abstract

Academic Identity, Parental Socialization, and Teacher Support of Charter School Latinx Adolescents

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Latinx students continue to lag behind other students in academic achievement across their academic career. One variable that has significantly predicted academic achievement in adolescents is their level of academic identity. The proposed study will measure the relationship between Latinx adolescents' (ages 10 to 15 years old) academic identity on two dimensions (i.e., *intrinsic value* and *belonging*) and their parental academic socialization (PAS), as well as the teacher academic support they receive at a local charter school. The study will use correlation, as well as a regression analysis to examine the variance explained in academic identity when regressed on PAS and teacher academic support.

Table of Contents

Introduction

In spite of the rhetoric and efforts to close the achievement gap at national levels of policy for students of ethnic minority backgrounds, Latinx students continue to work within a system of education that mitigates their efforts towards longitudinal, academic success (Pew Hispanic Center, 2011; Boser, Wilhelm, & Hanna, 2014). This Latinx academic achievement gap is observed in a variety of areas across the academic landscape: for reading, mathematics, and science scores, Latinx students score lower than average compared to their White peers (Campbell, 2001); for college completion rates, White students graduate at 62% while Latinx students graduate at 45.8 % (Shapiro et al., 2017); for high school dropout rates, Latinx students stand at the highest rates at 22% (Planty et al, 2008); and for office behavioral referrals, Latinx students are almost twice as likely to be referred for the same problem behavior as compared to White students (Skiba et al., 2011). Moreover, studies that focus on the determinants of health indicate relationships between lower levels of education and negative well-being in Latinx individuals from low-resource schools (Braveman, Egerter, and Williams, 2011).

In light of this pervasive and well-documented academic achievement gap for Latinx students, the proposed study seeks to analyze the relationships between variables that can highlight the pathways by which Latinx students find academic success. The primary variable of interest is academic identity, previously defined as the degree to which an individual's academic self-concept affects their self-esteem, a concept that has previously been shown to predict achievement in a number of ways. More importantly, the study seeks to obtain a greater understanding of the degree to which academic identity in Latinx students is related to the academic support that Latinx students experience from the two major systems and figures in their lives: that of the their Latinx parents and that of their charter school teachers. Ultimately, the

findings from such a study can help us to identify the adults in the lives of Latinx students who positively shape their academic identity, and consequently, their academic future.

Although a randomized experiment would be ideal to study the effect of parent socialization on academic identity, it would not be feasible given the parameters of our study. Therefore, I am proposing an associational study to examine the relationship between parent socialization, teacher support, and academic identity. I will include gender, grade level, generational status, and parental level of education as control variables, as previous studies suggest that these relate to both parental socialization and academic identity (as discussed in the literature review below). Holding these variables constant will allow for a better estimation of the effect of parent socialization and teachers support on academic identity- belonging. Ultimately, the results from this analysis will help to answer my primary question about whether the combination of both forms of support more significantly explains Latinx students' sense of academic belonging, rather than a singular form of support.

Literature Review

I begin the literature review by briefly describing the root of the systemic barrier that impedes Latinx students' academic success, as well as the historical, longstanding nature of the problem. I highlight factors previous scholars have identified as socio-culturally problematic for Latinx students and demonstrate an incongruence between the academic needs of the Latinx scholar and the educational services offered by the modern-day system of education. I then define the terms of interest that will set the context for the rest of this proposal.

Context of Latinx Achievement Gap

With the push from the national system of education for schools to implement rigorous and standardized testing, teachers report feeling at a loss when having to teach students from minority backgrounds: specifically, teachers must implement practices that fail to consider the unique perspectives and cultural viewpoints of students from non-majority cultures (Athanases, Achinstein, Curry, & Ogawa, 2016). In addition, detailed and longitudinal work suggests that the very anthropology of the education system is a poor match for the affective and cognitive needs of Latinx students (Valenzuela, 1999). For example, ethnographers posit that for Latinx students there exists a prerequisite need "to be cared for" by the school staff before the Latinx student can reciprocate and "care for" the needs of the school. Moreover, by remaining in a treatment-as-usual approach that insists that classrooms and campus policies follow Euro-American, White-centric values, the system deprives the Latinx student of the relational and interpersonal strengths gifted to her from her culture-of-origin (Valenzuela 1999; Garza & Crawford, 2005). Said another way: the very structure of the American school system effectually removes a portion of the social capital inherent to the Latinx student's cultural framework. Further, studies from the bilingualism literature demonstrate this "subtractive schooling" at work when teachers prioritize

English language in Latinx students, rather than help to foster a proficiency in their native Spanish language—a pedagogical choice with measurable and negative ramifications (Menken & Kleyn, 2010).

Regrettably, the racial and discriminatory practices that pervade the K-12 system have a deep rooted history in academia itself—with the mythology of the educationally antagonistic Mexican-American parent promoted in the psychological literature across the greater portion of the twentieth century. In his historical review, Valencia (2002) describes that as early as the 1920s scholars referred to school-age Latinx students as having "pedagogical retardation" when compared to White peers—an assumption based on the observation that Latinx students lacked the ability to speak English correctly, transferred schools frequently, and apparently practiced unhealthy eating habits. In addition, the Latinx family was targeted as disordered and characterized as ignorant of the "full value" of public school education. This continued into the 1960s, when the academe published "cultural deprivation" literature in which Mexican-American children and their families were described as culturally disadvantaged and intellectually deprived. Ultimately, these ideas are framed within a *deficit* model of conceptualization—one which fails to recognize the cultural power within the unique, interpersonal structure of the Latinx family framework.

As a result of this systemic discrimination, Latinx students continue to perform at lower rates of academic success when compared to Euro American students across many areas. Valencia (2010) describes this Latinx academic failure in three ways. First, academic school failure from Latinx students is *persistent*: Latinx students have had major problems with academic success from the earliest data points in the 1920s, in terms of either normative data or direct comparisons (Campbell, Hombo, & Mazzeo, 2000; Texas Education Agency, 1998).

Second, Latinx academic failure is *pervasive*: Latinx students experience academic failure across multiple locations in the country, observed from the local level (Austin Independent School District, 2009), all the way to the national level (National Center for Education, 2009). Lastly, academic school failure is *disproportional*: this can especially be seen in the high school dropout numbers of Latinx students compared to White students (Valencia, 2010). Indeed, Valencia identifies a significant disparity between White and Latinx in high school dropout rates, and highlights that in some estimates White students attend college at a 49% rate whereas Latinx students attend college at a 23% rate. In light of this disparity, the study at hand may provide us with a clearer understanding of the systems at work with this particular ethnic group, and help us to identify the agents in Latinx students' lives who can help counter this Latinx academic achievement gap.

With this systemic discrimination in mind, researchers have sounded the call for a more "critical caring framework"—one where both child and parent are seen as individuals worthy of effort; an initiative that calls for more ecologically inclusive goals that connect to the Latinx family system holistically (Gonzalez and Ayala-Alcanter, 2008; Piña-Watson, Lorenzo-Blanco, Dornhecker, Martinez, & Nagoshi, 2016). In line with this strength-based, family-positive approach, the proposed study proposes an examination of the variable of parental academic socialization, in addition to that of teacher support, to gain a more robust understanding of the role that adults of both microsystems play in the long term, academic development of the Latinx student. Moreover, by approaching these multiple settings through the framework of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems model (1977), we are able to consider the impact that multiple and interpersonal systems have on the Latinx individual's academic experience.

Main constructs of interest

For the sake of clarification, discussed here are the major factors of interest, with descriptions on how they have previously been understood within the literature. While their effects and the role they play in Latinx students' academic identity will be more thoroughly explored throughout the following sections, understanding their functions here will help to anchor the reader into their meaning and function.

Academic identity. Researchers have previously defined and measured Academic Identity in a number of ways. (Osborne, 1997; Smith, Estudillo, Kang, 2010; Strambler, Linke, Ward, 2013; Finn, 1989). In one instance, Osborne (1997) explains that an individual's identification with academics (or *academic identity*) is defined as the degree to which an individual's attitude towards academics affects their overall evaluation of the self. In these terms, academic identity is best understood with the constructs of self-esteem (i.e., "I am happy with my academic performance"), and academic self-concept (i.e., "I typically am good at reading."). Therefore, an adolescent with a positive sense of academic identity might state, "I am typically the kind of person who is good at reading and, overall, this makes me feel successful." With this framework for academic identity, Smith, Estudillo and Kang (2010) examined academic identity in eighth grade Black and White students and found that, although Black students reported more identification with academics, they achieved lower GPAs than their White counterparts—a finding which the authors interpreted as reflective of a systemic dilemma faced by students of color.

In a study with a large number of ethnic minority students, Strambler, Linke and Ward (2013) used multi-level modeling to examine the relationship between parental socialization,

academic identity, and academic achievement in Black and Latinx students. Results indicated that academic identification mediated the relationship between parental academic socialization and academic achievement in two relevant ways: students reported higher academic achievement when parents employed teaching and when parents talked about the future. Although identity and socialization were measured differently—with other demographic variables of interest than the study at hand—the findings from this article provide evidence that parents shape the way their children identify with academics on a psycho-emotional level. Studies such as this one, then, point to the potential impact of students' academic identity on their academics. Moreover, Matthews (2014) states that academic identity has to do with how the individual defines herself through "academic values, school belonging, regard, and performance," and is best measured in Latinx individuals when the measure of academic identity includes a subscale of belonging or connection (Discussed further in sections on academic identity).

Parental academic socialization. In a recent literature review, Suizzo (2014) defines *Parental academic socialization* (PAS) as a framework in which parents hold values and goals for their children's intellectual and academic development, which then motivates parents to interact with their children in ways to promote said values and goals. Further, PAS works on a number of dimensions: the way academic values/goals are communicated to the student/child; the behaviors and actions taken to ensure academic achievement occurs; and the environments created by the parent to foster the desired academic growth (Taylor, Clayton & Rowley, 2004; Bradley, 2002, McWayne, 2004). For example, McWayne et al. discovered that, with preschool families, conversations that centered on education, as well as at-home activities that promoted a culture of learning, positively predicted academic functioning in children. In addition, PAS has been demonstrated to be the most meaningful predictor of academic achievement across ethnic

groups in a number of meta-analyses that include Latinx families. (Fan and Chen, 2001; Hill and Tyson, 2009; Jeynes, 2007).

School and teacher support. The field has understood school and teacher academic support as the way in which schools and those who represent them support the academic learning of the students who attend the school. Researchers have studied school academic support both qualitatively and quantitatively, with the variable coming to predict a number of important academic outcomes that include motivation and positive ethnic regard (Alfaro, Umana-Taylor, Bamaca, 2006; Rivas-Drake, 2011). One example of the positive effects of teacher support is reported in Alfaro et al (2006), where researchers used a path model to demonstrate how teacher support positively predicts Latinx students' academic motivation. This pathway between teacher support and academic motivation is particularly relevant to the proposed study in that: a) like academic identity, motivation has been highly correlated with academic achievement; and b) the study at hand examines similar pathways between teacher-support and internal factors related to achievement. In addition, Plunkett, Henry, Houltberg, Sands, & Abarca-Mortensen (2008), utilized a dominance analysis that indicated that Mexican-origin adolescents who received teacher support were more likely to report higher academic motivation, as well as GPA. Finally, Alfaro & Umaña-Taylor (2015) studied Latinx students' self-report of teacher-support throughout high school and found a significant correlation between teachers' academic support and the motivation that students reported. Interestingly, the longitudinal patterns across all four years of high school for teachers differed from that of parental support, which suggests that the support parents provide to their children may work differently than the support that teachers provide to students across their high school years. In summary, teacher support has been established to be predictive of how motivated a Latinx student is in school, which is important to

the proposed study because it shows teacher support can predict intrapersonal factors that subsequently affect academic achievement.

In addition to these studies, Wentzel (1997) demonstrated that whenever students felt their teachers cared for them or engaged them in an interpersonal way, it positively predicted motivational outcomes for students. In her conceptualization, Wentzel described this specific form of teacher support as *pedagogical caring*—a process in which teachers model genuine caring, engage in conversations to demonstrate an empathic and mutual understanding, and expect/encourage their students to perform to the best of their intellectual ability. This conceptualization of teacher support is especially relevant to this study, because Latinx students have been shown to be specifically oriented to interpersonal relationships (Santiago 2002).

While these studies demonstrate the relationship between pedagogical caring/teachers support with academic motivation, I am interested to see if this relationship translates to the area of academic identity—to verify if Latinx students that report this personal experience of support from teachers also report a higher sense of academic identity. Although academic motivation is demonstrably related to achievement, it is also situation-specific, domain-specific and non-stable (Linnenbirink & Pintrich, 2002). In contrast, although from early to middle adolescence aspects of academic identity fluctuate across grade levels (Wigfield and Eccles, 2002; a variable which I will control for in the analysis), changes at the level of identity occur in stages over the lifespan, rather than situation-to-situation (Eccles 2009). Together, these findings suggest that the results that come from studying the changes in Latinx identity may lead to different conclusions and forms of intervention than results that come from studying educational motivation.

Identity and Academics in Latinx Students

As stated above, one of the variables central to the process of academic success for Latinx students is that of Academic Identity, and how the individual views the self within the domains of the academic (Oyserman, 2008). Although numerous studies have looked at other aspects of the Latinx self in the form of ethnic identity, the proposed study seeks to understand the Latinx self in relation to the system of education. Moreover, in order to later understand the factors that contribute to the formation of academic identity in Latinx adolescents, it is necessary to understand the social and developmental aspects of the Latinx student, especially as these dimensions contribute to the cognitions of Latinx students that concern identity. Following this, I review a definition of academic identity for Latinx students and explain why this specific conceptualization of academic identity is appropriate for exploring the proposed study's main questions.

The Latinx adolescent. Adolescence is a time of change, a moment in the life cycle where one begins to shape goals and personality in preparation for adulthood (Erikson 1968; Arnett, 2000). In developmental terms, adolescents are situated in a psychologically potent space, where the choices they make can influence their life long identity (Erikson, Paul, Heider, & Gardner, 1959). Further, adolescents are asked to make decisions about their social status, their family system, and post-secondary education plans (Yeager and Bundick, 2009; Eccles, Lorde, and Midgley, 1999). With adolescence being a period of transition with such decisional ramifications, one important question is: how do, specifically, Latinx adolescent students report dimensions of their identity during this period of transition, and how much of this is shaped by the messages from the microsystems around them? As a reminder, my decision to focus on schools and families arises from an understanding of ecological systems theory (Urie Bronfenbrenner 1977)—specifically, that individuals are influenced by the multiplicity of agents

and organizations that surround them. As such, I seek to analyze the levels that most directly impact the individual within the microsystemic layer, composed of the family and the school.

Latinx adolescents may experience societal development in a manner distinct from their individualistically-minded White cohort: rather than driven by a desire for autonomy and individualism (Erikson et. al, 1959), Latinx adolescents can instead be driven by a more collective, communal desire to grow within the counsel of a guardian—a value that remains into young adulthood (Santiago-Rivera, 2002). In line with previous studies that demonstrate how this unique sense of ethnic identity in minority students positively relates to academic achievement (Umaña-Taylor, et al.; Chang & Le, 2010; Chavous et al., 2003), the proposed study seeks to further clarify the link between Latinx adolescent students' sense of self and academic achievement—not within the context of the ethnic self, but, rather, the academic self. The following section further investigates the unique cultural space occupied by Latinx students compared to other people-groups, and how Latinx students' cultural idiosyncrasies can impact their academic engagement.

Nuances within academics, identity and ethnicity. In its examination of Latinx adolescents' social-emotional engagement with the culture of academics, the field has produced a variety of seemingly contrasting results and theories about the factors that drive Latinx students' academic behaviors (Griffin, 2002; Kaplan, 1999; Taylor & Graham, 2007). For example, when Kaplan (1999) studied the experiences of adolescent minority students who transferred from a low-income school to a college-forward academic school, the students reported that their previous circle of peers had held them back from academic achievement (Kaplan, 1999)—which suggests that, without intervention, adolescents in minority cultures surrounded by same-ethnic peers may not learn to foster an academic identity. Moreover, Taylor

and Graham (2007) found that Latinx adolescents were more likely to report admiration and respect for academically low-achieving, poorly behaved peers rather than high achieving peers—which suggests a lack of intrinsic valuation of academics on behalf of Latinx adolescents. At the same time, researchers have also found that Latinx individuals verbally and openly express a value towards specific aspects of the educational process, and communicate stronger feelings towards academic success than same-age, White peers (Fuligni, 2001). Moreover, additional studies demonstrate how a positive Latin ethnic identification in Latinx students predicts a number of positive academic outcomes such as self-efficacy and achievement (Hughes, Witherspoon, Rivas-Drake, & West-Bey, 2009; Ong, Phinney, & Dennis, 2006; Supple et al., 2006; Oyserman, 2008).

In light of the complex findings and theories related to minority students' perception of in-group identity, racism, and achievement (Ufkes, Calcagno, Glasford, & Dovidio, 2016; Petrone, 2016), future studies should attempt to integrate a social and communal understanding of belonging into their models of psychological success with Latinx students. Indeed, a case study with Latinx students who found academic success underscores that, if they are to succeed and integrate a positive academic identity, it may be important for minority adolescents to develop a social connection to their educational setting (Barajas-López, 2014). With this in mind, the proposed study hopes to clarify the importance of Latinx adolescents' sense of connection or belonging to the school system—one of the theorized, integral pieces of academic identity—and further the field's understanding about the value Latinx students place on academics.

In addition to Latinx adolescents holding collectivist-family values distinct from students of more individualistic cultures, the academic experience that Latinx students encounter is also distinct from the experience of students in other collectivist cultures. For example, although

students of Asian descent and students of Latino descent both view themselves as connected to a larger system of family—with both sets of students working to pay honor to their parents' labor (Valenzuela & Dornbusch, 1994)—one study that examined the unconscious racial bias in academic peers indicated that Latinx students receive unique, subtle, societal messages that denote an ethnic incompatibility with education (Graham, 2001). In contrast, Asian-American students are, as a whole, perceived as "biologically" and "culturally" predisposed to succeed academically, with a societal perception towards Asian-American students as being intelligent, having fluid science and math skills, and generally mild-mannered (Kao, 2000). Further evidence of this differing academic experience between Latinx students and Asian-American students can be seen in a structural equation modeling study conducted by Chang and Le (2010). In this study, researchers worked with a sample of Latinx and Asian-American adolescents to examine the effect of perceived multiculturalism (i.e., the perception that the school setting values cultural diversity) on ethnocultural empathy (i.e., empathic understanding of and appreciation of ethnic/cultural diversity), and its moderating effects on academic outcomes (i.e., GPA). Interestingly, although perceived multiculturalism positively predicted ethnocultural empathy in both groups of students, ethnocultural empathy only went on to positively relate to grade point average in Latinx students but not in Asian-American students. Chang and Le suggest that the experience of a school's cultural openness may affect Latinx students in a way distinct than how it affects Asian-American students in that it is positively predicts academic success in Latinx students, but not Asian-American students. In other words, although interpersonal relationships may be important for students in both minority groups, the experience of feeling welcomed by the system engages Latinx students' academic achievement in a unique way. These differences between the experiences of Latinx students and students of other cultures point to the need to

further understand the predictors of academic identity in this specific population; a group that can approach academics communally, and responds to positive-diversity in a unique way.

The importance of belonging in academic identity. The lack of understanding concerning identity and its conceptualization for students of color may relate to how the field has come to define the *self*. Psychology, as a discipline, has historically sought to understand the nature of human thought, behavior, and emotion within the *individual* (Markus, 2008). Indeed, for the majority of its existence, psychology maintained a focus on Western-centric cultures which related to the "self-made-man" (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), based on a Euro-American model that rewarded the self-realized individual who achieved success through his own will, strength, and intelligence.

Although viewing academic success through this individualist lens can explain much about Western, Euro-American ways of thought and behavior, this approach may not accurately capture the experiences of individuals who belong to societies where the *self* is construed as connected to an immediate system—an experience central to the lives of those of Latin American descent (Santiago-Rivera, 2002). Moreover, failure to understand how Latinx adolescents experience the 'self' as within community can lead to not understanding the full weight and felt consequences that result when a Latinx student realizes they belong to a system with academic barriers. Indeed, it is interesting that when Latinx individuals report a crisis of identity, this experience is described not only in terms of a geographical displacement, but also in terms of social estrangement (Anzaldua, 1999; Carrillo, 2013; Caldera & Lindsey, 2013). Given the weight and importance, then, of belonging and community for the Latinx student, an added dimension of connection or belonging would be appropriate to accurately measure identity in this population, especially as it relates to a communal setting such as school. Indeed, Nichols (2006)

underscores the importance of school belonging as a multi-dimensional construct that is composed of the social support from school staff and peers, the academic support of teachers, and the environment/habitus in which learning takes place (i.e., computers; spaciousness; outdoor equipment). Said another way, Latinx students, perceptive of the quality of their education even at the level of items and objects, may develop an internal measure of how the system values their learning, which then affects their level of engagement with said system. School belonging, then, appears to be an important dimension to consider when measuring academic identity and will be accounted for in this study.

Further evidence that signals the importance of a multidimensional understanding of academic identity is found in Matthews (2014) which used a cross sectional study with 330 African-American and Latinx adolescent students to measure the associations between different theoretical dimensions of academic identity. Using a number of analytical procedures (i.e., correlational matrix; hierarchical analysis; multivariate analysis), Matthews found that, although most dimensions of academic identity did not relate highly with each other or with academic achievement, the variables of intrinsic value (e.g., "being a good student is central to how I think of myself") and school belonging (e.g., "My relationships with my teachers and peers and at my school make me feel like I belong there.") were significant predictors. First, intrinsic value of school in Latinx students predicted a positive sense of self efficacy, the belief that one possesses the ability to complete a task with success. Second, intrinsic value and school belonging strongly correlated with each other. From these results, Matthews proposes that, "as an individual bonds with the school community, the school's values can become internalized over time, manifesting as the values of the individual" (p. 150). What this indicates, then, is that academic identity: a) can predict academic processes in meaningful ways; and b) is most accurately captured when the

measure accounts for more than a singular dimension.

This theoretical understanding asserted by Matthews (2014) of how a sense of belonging and connection contributes meaningfully to the formation of academic identity in students of minority cultures is further examined by Matthews, Banerjee, and Lauermann (2014). These researchers sought to understand the interaction between Academic identity and Mastery Goal orientation—an orientation characterized by persistent effort, continual self-improvement, and a desire to master the content at hand. Having understood how, for minority students, academic identity is strongly associated with having a sense of social connection, researchers similarly defined academic identity as composed of two different components: a component of *Value* (i.e., the intrinsic importance, personal interest, and enjoyment of academic tasks as reported by the student); and a component of *Belonging* (i.e., wanting to belong to a group—in this case, the school). Moreover, although school belonging is important for most adolescents, it is uniquely beneficial for students from marginalized populations (Faircloth and Hamm, 2005; Sanchez, Colon, & Esparza; Walton & Cohen, 2011). Researchers found a significant relationship between Academic Identity–*Belonging* and Mastery Orientation, which suggests that Latinx students who experience a sense of connection and belonging towards school and academics come to place a premium on mastering content and adapt positively to failure—an adaptation which increases self-esteem and achievement in college populations (Robins & Pals, 2002).

Furthermore, the findings from Matthews et al (2014) demonstrate the importance that Academic Identity has to predict the day to day study habits that Latinx students enact. Although the proposed study does not measure mastery orientation per se, the Matthew et al (2014) study lays the theoretical groundwork for the proposed study, and highlights how specific dimensions of academic identity can powerfully predict the day-to-day academic habits taken by Latinx

students. Moreover, given the unique predictive power that school belonging has on academic achievement, the findings underscore the need for more studies to examine how significant others in the Latinx adolescent's microsystems can enhance their sense of academic identity—connections which will be measured by our proposed study.

Schools, Teacher Support, and Latinx Students

Having examined: a) the interpersonal, systematic barriers experienced by Latinx students across their educational trajectory; and b) how *academic identity* in minority students plays an integral and predictive role in efficacious studious behaviors that can work to overcome these barriers, this review will now examine the types of support the school provides to Latinx students—both the positive and negative elements that affect their academic experience and identity. Then, this section will consider one potential solution that has emerged to address the societal barriers and increase Latinx Academic Identity: the High Commitment Charter School (HCCs). I outline how the underlying philosophies that drive charter schools can reduce societal barriers for Latinx students and concurrently increase a healthy sense of academic self. Thereafter, I will describe where the HCC has succeeded, as well as why it remains necessary to include a measure of Latinx family socialization in addition to measuring the support that a charter school teacher provides.

How teachers shape identity. There are a number of researchers who have highlighted the theoretical framework by which teachers and schools help students to adopt values related to academic identity (Noddings, 1992; Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Connell & Wellborn, 1991; Anderman, 2003). Noddings (1992) describes different components by which pedagogical caring on the part of teacher comes to shape the student's sense of belonging and value—mechanisms that help students to internalize academic values (Wentzel 1997). First, Noddings recommends a

form of modeling absent of coercion, whereby the teacher *teaches* caring by *showing* caring towards the student. Interestingly, this demonstration of modeled "caring" aligns with what Valenzuela (2002) highlights is necessary for Latinx students to feel a sense of connection to school. Next, Nodding describes how dialogue that is experienced as genuine by the student—that gives way to the "why" questions—effectively trains the student to acquire different "habits of mind" where they internalize a desire to acquire the correct type of information. This effectually helps the transition from student into scholar (Stevens & Olivarez, 2007). Noddings thirdly describes the importance of practice within the teacher support relationship, whereby mentalities are shaped. Essentially, the teacher comes to represent the institution of academia or school, a figure with the power and agency to mold certain attitudes on how to look at the world. In short, to make change at the level of identity, Noddings prescribes, "The experience of caregiving should initiate or contribute to the desired attitude, but the conditions have to be right, and people are central to the setting" (p. 24).

Current practices and challenges with teachers. The microsystem of the school is, without a doubt, a factor that impacts the lived experiences of Latinx students. Teachers, staff, and the philosophy that drive the educational practices within the system all contribute to the way that the student comes to understand who they are within the system (Erikson, 1996; Anderman, 2003). With regards to the study of diversity in pedagogical settings, associational studies indicate that both Latinx and Black students experience a sense of security within multiethnic environments (Juvonen, Nishina, & Graham, 2006) — and describe fewer feelings of loneliness, less harassment from other school peers, and an increased perception of self-worth. However, numerical diversity in itself may not result in healthy educational perceptions for Latinx students; instead, healthy perceptions are contingent on the way said diversity is framed

and worded. For example, social psychologists Park and Judd (2005) assert that, if not communicated carefully, explicit group differentiation can result in an increase of intergroup bias. In other words, if teachers do not converse about diversity in a positive way, the saliency of the diversity can actually create difficulties for students of minority cultures. Additional findings from the review are that a color-blind approach may result in a negative self-view, and that students of ethnic minority groups experience an increase in self-esteem when they have a positive view of themselves within their own groups. The article suggests that when school practices are driven by a *value-diversity* message, rather than a color-blind approach or a mere categorical distinction, they positively influence the experience of belonging for students of color. As it relates to identity, then, there is a healthy and welcoming way by which the agents in the school can make Latinx students feel that they belong to the system.

In addition to positive diversity messages, other studies have documented the way that the adults in the educational community create effects, both positive and negative, in the lives of Latinx adolescents. For example, Latinx adolescents reported that an experience of public ethnic regard from the teachers in their school—i.e., the perception that the adults at the school did not view the adolescent's ethnic group as a deficit—predicted higher levels of engagement and academic achievement as measured by GPA (Rivas-Drake, 2011). Moreover, in line with the general finding that a celebration of diversity can lead to healthy outcomes, qualitative studies identify the underlying components of messages from school personnel that create meaningful experiences for Latino students. For instance, Gonzalez (2009) describes effective ways by which teachers can integrate the Mexican-American experience into the school culture itself and, consequently, promote healthy identity development in their students. In this study, participants reported that a sense of renewed commitment to school occurred when: a) they attended

community meetings that dismantled negative racial stereotypes; and b) when teachers praised their dual language ability as asset, rather than as lack of acculturation. In summary, whenever teachers make Latinx students feel that their cultural ways are “normal” and “equal in status” as their White counterparts, a well-constructed sense of identity self develops, which can in turn affect academics in a positive direction.

Aside from the previously described overarching historical and systematic bias that negatively affects the educational trajectory of the Latinx student (i.e., negative expectations for Latinx students), a number of studies underscore the cognitive stereotypes active in the minds of instructors within the classroom (Gonzalez and Ayala-Alcantar, 2008; Brown, 2008). In a study with pre-service teachers, findings indicated that when students spoke with Spanish accent (i.e., low-status accent) teachers were more likely to characterize the students as less intelligent. However, teachers did not respond in the same way towards students with other noticeable accents (e.g., Australian). Furthermore, when teachers associated Latinx student with an immigration status, they were more likely to view the students as unwilling to acculturate to the needs of the school. Finally, teachers in the study reported the common stereotype that others perceive Latinx parents as not valuing education, as well as not wanting to involve themselves in the educative process. These findings relate to the proposed study in that the biases that teachers hold affect the way the teacher supports the Latinx students, which can in turn affect the student’s sense of connection and belonging to the school.

Equipped with an understanding of the implicit biases (i.e., Spanish accent associated with less academic orientation) that minority students experience within academic settings, a number of interventions with varying levels of success have been implemented to affect the academic achievement and engagement of Latino students (Cerezo & McWhirter, 2012; Walten

& Cohen, 2011; Aronson, Fried & Good, 2002). Cerezo & McWhirter (2012) implemented the Latino Education Equity Project, a program that utilized a series of discussions led by a trained facilitator with Latinx College students that centered on Critical Race theory. To validate the experiences of the Latinx students—a process theorized to reduce the feelings associated with feeling misunderstood by the system—the conversations focused on the salient differences between home life and college life, in the hopes that this would lead to greater adjustment to collegiate culture. The results, however, were mixed, with control group and treatment group showing no significant differences in cultural congruity. In light of the literature review on the effects of teachers on Latinx students, perhaps the intervention would have yielded better results if a professor (i.e., someone who represented the system of education in a meaningful way) had led the conversations. At any rate, studies such as this one demonstrate the challenges inherent to closing the cultural gap of Latinx academics and call for a more clear identification of the variables and agents of change required to enact experiences of belonging in Latinx students—factors which this proposed study hopes to clarify further.

Finally, Barajas-López (2014) collected the experiences of four different Latinx students in an ethnographic study, where students described how their interactions with teachers affected their engagement with mathematics. Importantly, Latinx students reported that the type of relationship maintained with the teacher affected students' level of engagement with the specific math task at hand. This indicates that how students perceive teacher support can influence how students' perceive themselves, as well as the academic tasks they undertake.

Strengths and values of the HCC. As discussed in sections above, there are a number of ways by which the Latinx-student-community faces marginalization within the practices of the

school system. In a systematic review at the level of classroom and curriculum, a number of researchers discuss how a general cultural bias negatively affects marginalized communities, like the Latinx community, specifically in the domains of cultural knowledge, attitudes and values (Darder 1991; Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985). Indeed, researchers go so far to state that the dominant school culture functions to marginalize communities dissimilar to the hegemonic culture, effectively "disconfirming" forms of knowledge that Latinx students bring with them when they enter school. Further, in another systematic examination of the practices of school through a Critical Race lens, Yosso (2002) argues that traditional curricular structures reveal a hidden curriculum that works against the cultural mindsets of Latinx students.

In light of these overarching cultural biases that can trickle down into classroom practices, we now examine studies that highlight how HCC Schools can alleviate some of the academic biases and subtractive schooling that Latinx students would otherwise experience. Firstly, according to the No Child Left Behind (2007) statement on charter schools, the nature of charter school structure should be such that teachers can exercise more flexibility with how they teach. If teachers, then, can exercise more latitude in how they choose to transmit information to their students, the HCC School may be especially ready to adopt a framework of teaching that considers the specific, cultural values that facilitate learning for Latinx students. As previously reviewed, Latinx students identified as academically engaged report that whenever schools manage to disrupt the negative racial stereotypes associated with minority status, a greater experience of healthy identity and wholeness is experienced by the student (Rivas-Drake, 2011; Perez-Felkner, 2015). In this way, the flexible and personable nature of the HCC can create a micro-culture that mitigates the negative effect of society on Latinx children.

In addition, teachers at charter schools may be more able to raise standards and

expectations while they also provide appropriate levels of support to scaffold Latinx students towards their academic goals (i.e., for a math-based example, see Kennedy & Smolinsky, 2016). For example, Athanases, Achinstein, Curry, & Ogawa (2016) note a number of factors that help activate this educational connection and "college-going culture," such as high expectations and high support to attend college, combined with belief and motivation. Moreover, at the charter school where researchers conducted their study, teachers used body language and communication lessons to teach students "codes of power" where the goal was to convey a message that the students were more than able to function in a college environment and act according to the norms in place. In other words, the charter school and the teachers who represent them can foster the identity of the "college-goer" in their Latinx students through various methods of support.

A third way in which the charter school facilitates the educational experience for the Latinx adolescent is at the dimension of the interpersonal relationship (Kennedy & Smolinsky, 2016; Gonazales, Ulloa, & Munoz, 2016)—a process which is highly relevant to this proposed study. Athaneses et al (2016) highlighted the work of key agents in the charter school system; specifically, the work of "Consuelo," a model-teacher who consistently weaved classroom topics back into notions of "community, family, and identity." What the findings from this study underscore is that in order for charter schools to serve the Latinx community, merely reducing the classroom lessons to their "functionality" is ineffective; instead, to see different results with this growing population, a new psychology should be considered—one that is increasingly student-centered and relationally-focused. In summary, the charter school provides an ideal setting to alter the academic identity of the Latinx student, with charter school- teachers perhaps being the ideal agents to design the spaces where Latinx students' cultural values are celebrated.

Complex processes in charter schools. Having considered the promising implications of the HCC—both in the realm of theory and documented effects—there still exists a number of studies that indicate how larger cultural and societal factors can mitigate charter school teachers' ability to deliver culturally-sensitive practices (Gonzales, Ulloa, & Muñoz, 2016; Blum, 2015). For instance, Gonzales et al. (2016) highlights the lack of understanding between charter-school-teachers and their Latinx students —specifically, teachers who enter the field with expectations based from a white-middle class background. Indeed, teachers may be unaware of the specific challenges that underprivileged Latinx students face (i.e., necessities of electricity and reduced and free eligibility of lunch). Moreover, Gonzales et al. states that, while some charter schools are "marketed" as more creative and less bureaucratic, the reality may be otherwise, with HCCs falling into the same test demanding practices observed in traditional public schools. Lastly, even within charter schools, there are times when the curriculum may not fit the needs of many ELL Latinx students. Ultimately, the many demands may be such that teachers and staff end up burnt out, with no desire to create curriculums that supports the specific needs of their Latinx students.

Another area of complication comes in the way that charter schools generally attempt to enact academic change towards minority students as a whole, a goal that may speak to the needs of one group of students, over the other. For example, Blum (2015) argues that many high commitment charter school target students who fall under the umbrella of LIBL (Low Income Black or Latinx students)—a label which can mask important information required to address specific Latinx students' needs (i.e., English Language Learner status; parental capital; poverty status). Furthermore, findings from an ethnography by Paris' (2010) found a mix of positive and negative outcomes related to Latinx students' ability to switch from English into Spanish. Specifically, students at the charter school described that, although Black peers may at times

describe bilingualism as a strength for their Latinx peers, it can also be a source of pain and exclusion for their Black-peers, who themselves do not have the same language connection. As such, this finding highlights the need for more studies to focus on specific groups of minority students in order to address their unique cultural needs. This more focused attention can help us to develop more targeted and supportive techniques for teachers to implement that can increase the academic identity in specific populations.

Thirdly, although HCC schools and staff may have more flexibility with how they respond to the racial needs of their students, these individuals may still be affected by heuristic biases. For example, Bancroft (2009) conducted a yearlong ethnographic study that sought to understand how the rhetoric of charter schools addressed schools differently depending on the socioeconomic status of the school. When the researcher compared the experience of charter schools that served minority students (with Latinx students) and those that served White, middle-class students, a contrasting experience emerged between the principals at the predominantly White school and the principals at the school with a predominant number of minorities. Specifically, when the effects of race and poverty were not as salient, charter school principals were less likely to observe the need for culturally sensitive practices; on the other hand, principals at the low income schools appeared highly cognizant of the effects of poverty and race. The findings further the point that, while the staff who work at charter schools may have more flexibility and agency with how they allocate the money they spend, those same staff can be unconsciously influenced by the demographics of the children they serve (i.e., White; of Color), which then affects the decisions they make. In other words, that a school organization and the individuals who work there have more freedom does not necessarily indicate that those agents will promote culture in a way that is positive for the Latinx who attend there.

Finally, Athanases, Achinstein, Curry and Ogawa (2016) observed that Latinx students lagged behind their White, college-dominant counterparts in all core areas of academics: English, math, reading, and science, with others citing many needing academic remediation in college. Although charter schools may successfully help to increase the rate by which Latinx students attend college, the issue of college-readiness remains. In addition, even in some charter schools, teachers perceive an incongruence with the fit of their students and the school, and may fail to engage their Latinx students' sense of belongingness (Nichols, 2006).

The importance of Latinx parents. These previous studies suggest that, although the philosophy of the charter school adopted by teachers is important, it may also be helpful to examine how other agents in their lives contribute to their academic experience, such as the circumstances of the home. Indeed, in light of the variable nature of charter schools, their teachers, and their ability to affect the academic identity of Latinx students, how parental academic socialization practices associate with Latinx students' sense of belonging should also be analyzed. In a study where they examined more than 1,000 schools, Weiher and Tedin (2002) found that the decision to remove their child from their local public school to a certain charter school was more likely to occur if said charter school had more same-race students in attendance. This finding highlights the high impact that parents have for their Latinx children, especially in terms of selecting the school of choice, and subsequently applying for their child to gain entrance. Indeed, it points to the need to understand the role that parents play within charter-school Latinx families, and to investigate the thoughts and practices across Latinx families. In addition, Garcia-Reid, Peterson, & Reid (2015) found that it was not only teacher support, but also parental support, that strongly predicted a student's avoidance of problem behavior, and increases in academic engagement. Finally, Whiting, Feinauer, and VanDerwerken (2012)

documented the demographic differences and heterogeneity that exists within Latinx families, which authors use to highlight the need to understand how these differences affect educational and social practices—an idea that is supported by the findings in the next section.

Latinx Families, Socialization, and Identity

In order to understand how Latinx adolescents view their identity within the setting of academics, an exploration of how Latinx parents socialize their children culturally and educationally is necessary, along with an examination of the various socialization practices that parents use throughout their children's lives. In addition, a general overview of the principles by which Latinx families govern their households will help elucidate the valuations present in this population, which in turn frames how they teach their children about who they are academically. Lastly, while each family of Latinx descent is unique—that is, each family unit works within its own heterogeneous subculture and practices (Whiting, Feinauer, & VanDerwerken, 2012)—there are notable principles and beliefs that together create a common framework from which Latinx parents draw on to instruct their children and adolescents.

Latinx family values. Reviewed below are a number of important Latinx family values discussed extensively by Santiago-Rivera (2002). Central to Latinx family structure is the principle of *familismo*, previously defined as the deep sense of obligation and connection that Latinx children experience towards their parents. This idea of *familismo* is especially important in that it centralizes the notion of self within a communal experience, notable when one evaluates the factors related to self-efficacy, and the underlying motivations that drive Latinx adolescents academically. Interestingly, because aspects of familismo can fluctuate from generation to generation (Suizzo, 2014), and because familismo is related to parental socialization, the variable of generational status will be controlled for in this study.

Similarly related is the Latinx family value of *Personalismo,* defined as the high valuation of interpersonal relationships which carries a high emotional valence and contributes to the decisions Latinx individuals make. This value is seen in the role of the *compadre* and *comadre*—close friends of the parents selected at the religious baptism to assist in advising and gift giving as the Latinx child develops throughout later cultural-religious markers (i.e., *Quinceaneras;* wedding ceremonies). Thus, from birth to adult maturation, the Latinx child finds themselves in a relationship that underscores a strong sense of community and an involvement of others in their wellbeing across the lifespan.

Couched within the Latinx family's interpersonal understanding of Personalismo are a number of sub-concepts, such as: *Respeto* (i.e., societal expectation that Latinx adolescents will defer to adults and individuals who authoritatively preside over them); and *Dignidad*/*Orgullo* (i.e., a sense of pride strongly connected to honor). Although most cultures view respect as necessary to maintain relationships, the Latinx family differs in that pride and dignity operate at a more core layer of the self (Santiago-Rivera, 2002). To return to my original question about academic identity: if Latinx family values, at first blush, would seemingly encourage Latinx children to succeed academically and bring pride to the family by respecting their teachers, why then do Latinx children appear to lag behind other children? Indeed, as this review of core Latinx family values suggests, the achievement gap cannot solely be explained by a mismatch between Latinx family values and academics. The next section discusses how Latinx parents talk about education to their children more generally, as well as the implications for what it means about their identity.

Latinx cultural socialization and academics. One of the unique dimensions of the Latinx

experience is the relationship between ethnicity, immigration, and acculturation. Since previous research has investigated the results that emerge from the types of messages Latinx parents provide to their adolescents, it is useful to understand how Latinx parents discuss their family's placement within the larger American cultures. Ultimately, understanding the relationship between group relations and identity on behalf of Latinx parents will generate for us a more complete picture about the stressors students from this culture group face in the creation of a positive school identity. Moreover, this section aims to demonstrate how school-related identity in Latinx students predicts academic success, and how this identity is shaped by the *consejos* (advice/guidance) provided to them by their parents.

First, when one examines the many ways that Latinx parents talk to their children about race, culture, and ethnicity, the findings from studies further the notion that the *kind* of messages provided to children will predict either positive or negative academic trajectories (Ceballo, Maurizi, Suarez, & Aretakis, 2013). Grindal and Niheri (2015) examined the interrelation of ethnic-racial socialization, ethnic identity, and academic performance in a sample of Latinx ninth grade adolescents. Researchers discovered that whenever parents spoke to their adolescents in a way that fostered distrust of other racial and ethnic groups, Latinx students were significantly less likely to achieve academically as measured by self-reported grades. In addition, results indicated that if, rather than disparaging out groups, Latinx parents instead promoted knowledge and pride about their family's ethnicity, Latinx adolescents were more likely to find academic success. Together, these results indicate that while a healthy social identity can serve as predictor of Latinx success in schools, the mechanism through which Latinx students achieve this success depends on the kind of in-group/out-group messages Latinx parents promote in the home.

In addition to messages that communicate racial understandings about the self and the

other, additional studies suggest that how Latinx parents frame the parent-child relationship, as well as their aspirations for their child, can affect how the child resolves their sense of academic identity. For instance, in a qualitative study that interviewed Latinx adolescents on how they viewed their relational "self," Maciel and Knudson-Martin (2014) found that Latinx adolescents with first generation parents reported an "identity bind" as a result of not feeling their societal place in either American culture or Mexican culture. These adolescents described having to select one of two major narratives: a) a *restricting* narrative characterized by parental messages of shame (i.e., "don't sacrifice my sacrifice) and school messages of being unworthy as part of an overarching discriminatory culture; or b) an *empowering* narrative characterized by parental messages that framed parental sacrifice as a tool through which children could reap their own rewards. Ultimately, Latinx adolescents reported that the empowering narratives fostered a sense of ethnic pride, an identity resolve, and a feeling of hope and optimism towards academic goals.

To recapitulate, Latinx parents socialize their children with values that can emphasize a positive identity within their own group, while not engendering mistrust of other groups and without a sense of guilt. Moreover, Latinx parents contribute to how their children view themselves, not only within the microsystem of family, but also within the macrosystem of the U.S., with all of its burgeoning cultures. Finally, the Latinx parent-child relationship itself serves as either a source of acculturative stress, or as motivation for the Latinx child to work and, subsequently, succeed in their respective academic setting. In short, the Latinx-child relationship and the messages that emerge from the relationship take place within a cultural context, which affects the Latinx adolescent's construal of self in relation to others.

Latinx academic socialization. Although, as indicated in previous sections, values and

cultural socialization have measured effects on Latinx students' self-perception, a third contributing factor is how Latinx parents dialogue about education and the value of the school system itself (Durand, 2011). Indeed, the messages and ideas Latinx parents provide to their children predict how connected Latinx children will feel within their school setting. It is important, then, to understand the approach and content that Latinx parents utilize when they talk about education to their developing adolescents.

Valadez (2002) examined the parental factors that predicted Latinx adolescents' decisions to enroll in advanced math courses—an enrollment that reliably predicts positive outcomes in higher education. What researchers found was that Latinx parents' different forms of social capital (i.e., family interconnections), human capital (i.e., parental education degrees), and parental discussions, significantly and positively predicted Latinx children's enrollment in advanced math courses. The finding from this study suggests that the types of messages and ideas that Latinx parents communicate to their students can have measurable effects on the long-term academic choices their children make.

In addition to course selection, the degree to which Latinx parents discuss the value of work, rather than the value of learning and education, can impact the long-term educational choices that the child makes (Rodriguez, Rhodes, and Aguirre (2015). In addition to the ways in which parents frame communication in the home, Latinx parents may also place certain logistical restrictions on the kinds of educational programs to which their children may apply. For example, in one study that sought to understand whether *familismo* predicted students' decisions to apply to local community colleges over four-year-universities, researchers found that although student-reported familismo did not significantly relate to this decision, their parents' parental preferences did relate to their decision to live at home (Ovink & Kalogrides 2015). Again, this

finding underscores the weight that Latinx parents have on the educational choices their children make.

Finally, a number of theorists (Coleman, 1988; Sewell and Hauser, 1980) have described how in addition to raw financial capital, parents contribute to their student's educational trajectory through the social and interpersonal provisions they provide for them. Moreover, researchers further describe how a parent's level of education can predict the level of expectations that parents will have for their children's academic attainment. Indeed, Sewell and Hauser (1980) describe that if even one of the children's parents have attained a bachelor's degree, the student will have at minimum one parent-model to which aspire. Due, then, to the potential relationship between level of education and parental socialization, I will control for parental level of education in the regression analysis.

Moreover, the field has produced a number equivocal results with how parental socialization works across gender, and how that comes to affect academics (Alfaro et al, 2006; Plunket et al, 2008; Taylor & Graham, 2007): while under some conditions, grade levels, and types of parental guidance, Latinx boys achieve more in the area of academics, the same can be said for Latinx girls. Given the potential confounding effects of gender on parental socialization, I will also enter gender as a control variable into the equation.

In closing, although the mythology of the Latinx parent as "educational agnostic" has previously been challenged, more studies are needed to clarify the relationship between the messages Latinx parents provide to their child and how Latinx adolescents orient themselves towards academics. Moreover, although Latinx families are invested in their children's education at various levels—having, at times, reported higher levels of educational investment than White counterparts (Ryan, Casas, Kelly-Vance, Ryalls, & Nero, 2010)—further inquiry is needed to

replicate studies that show how socialization practices relate to academic identity. What this proposed study seeks to understand, then, is the extent to which academic socialization practices enacted by parents predict a positive, meaningful sense of academic identity in Latinx students.

The Proposed Study

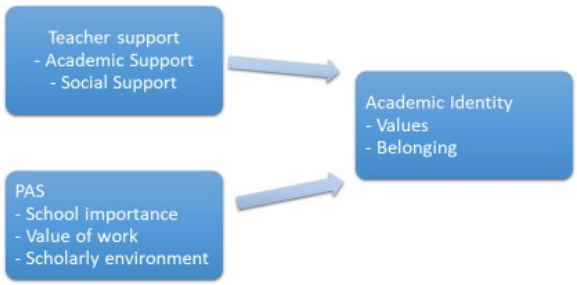
With the numerous difficulties experienced by Latinx students across their educational careers—barriers that occur at both the macro level (i.e., policy; culture) and micro level (i.e., classrooms)—it is important for professionals invested in education and psychology to understand how Latinx students develop their academic self. In addition, the academic setting of a high commitment charter school, especially one invested in promoting change at the level of culture as well as the self, can help elucidate the relationship between classroom teacher practices and how this message affects students' belonging and values. In addition, given the strong family values inherent to the Latinx family, the study would be remiss to not explore the predictive power of the socialization messages the parental system provides to these burgeoning scholars.

In order to explore these variables, the proposed study uses the conceptualization of academic identity as argued by Matthews, Banerjee, and Lauermann (2014) to examine identity both through *Value*s and through *Belonging*. This is in line with Matthews et al (2014) recommendation that, due to its complexity, academic identity should be measured with more than one dimension. Furthermore, having understood the way in which Latinx parents who operate under the collectivist principle of *familismo* (i.e., family connection) play an important role in building their children's sense of *Belonging* (Valdez, 2002), the study will measure the extent to which parental academic socialization relates to Latinx children's sense of academic identity. The study will also measure Latinx students' report on the academic support they receive from teachers and how it relates to academic identity.

From this literature review, then, arises five different hypotheses: Whenever teachers practice pedagogical caring, the students whom the serve are more likely to take on the values of the teacher and feel welcomed by the system the teacher represents (Noddings, 1992; Wentzel,

1997). Therefore, teacher support will be positively associated with academic identity, on both dimensions of 1) Belonging and 2) Values. As discussed above, the messages parents use to shape their children's identity affects how their children view themselves in relation to other groups. Therefore, Parental Academic Socialization (PAS) will also be associated with two different dimensions of academic identity—both 3) Belonging and 4) Values. Finally, Latinx parents who have successfully navigated the system of education emphasize the importance of both the school and the home as it relates to academic success (Jimenez-Silva, 2009). As such, 5) Parental Academic Socialization and Teacher support will together explain more of the variance in Belonging over that which can be explained by only teachers support or only PAS, all while controlling the variables of grade level, parental level of education, gender, and generational status. (See Figure 1).

Figure 1 – *Relationship between PAS, Teacher Support, and Academic Identity- Belonging*



Methods

Participants

Participants are estimated to be 100 adolescents between the ages of 10 and 15 years old from three different charter schools that are all regulated under the same high commitment charter school system and organization. Although at the time of this proposal there are 73 participants for whom we have demographic data, we are on track to reach our recruitment goal of at least 27 more participants. The target sample size was selected due to the requirements of the grant that funds the study, with the option to review the progress and recruit additional families as needed. Eligibility for participation in the proposed study includes: a) the child being 10 to 15 years old; b) identified as Latino/a by their parent; c) to have a parent or legal guardian over 18-years-old who participates in the study for certain measures related to the bilingualism segment of the study: and d) to be able to speak English and Spanish. Graduate students who screen the parents at different times during the procedure (i.e., initial recruitment; follow-up phone call) will verify eligibility. Based on the requirements of this study, 100% of the participants will identify in some form as Latinx, with a majority of 97% who identify as Mexican-American, and the rest who identify as being part of another Latinx ethnicity (i.e., Puerto-Rican, Central American, Cuban). In terms of generational status, we estimate about 85% of students to be second-generation, and the remainder to be first-generation. I estimate the mean age of participants to be 12 years old. Moreover, because charter schools work with low-income students, I estimate that the majority of the students will be of lower socioeconomic status (97%) with parents who earn below $30,000 per year, 2% who earn below $40,000 a year, and 1% who earns below $50,000 a year.

My researcher and I have previously provided educational workshops on diversity

training for teachers and staff at one of the charter schools, and have maintained a professional relationship with administrators at the school sites. Based on the screening criteria of the bilingualism study, 100% of the students will answer the questionnaires in English.

Procedures

Recruitment. We have recruited participants from a local charter branch with various sites located across a city in the Central Texas area. Graduate research assistants visited four different campuses and informed potential participants about the nature of a three-part, longitudinal study on bilingualism, mental health, and how Latinx parents help their children to cope with stress (i.e., purpose, description of study, monetary incentive, length of study, etc.). After the announcement, we sent recruitment forms home with the students, with interested participants returning the form with signatures from their parents. Graduate students contacted interested parents by phone, asked criteria questions about age, ethnic identity, and parent's age/guardianship. If participants were eligible for the study, we conducted home visits with two graduate assistants: one who worked with the parent and another who worked with the student. Each session of the study consisted of questionnaires, working-memory tasks, and/or storytelling tasks that assessed levels of bilingualism, executive functioning, mental health, response to stress, how parents socialized their children to cope with stressors, and other related processes. The first session lasted, on average, about 3 and ½, hours, the second session lasted about 1 and ½ hours, and the final session lasted ½ an hour. The second visit occurred six months after the first session, and the third visit occurred 6 months after the second visit.

In terms of the proposed additional session of the study, a majority of the Latinx families have personally been met with through process described above, and have remained in contact through a series of mailed newsletters. Upon first round of contacts, participants signed a consent

form that informed them that we would contact them in the future for more studies, with no obligation to participate in the future.

We will propose an amendment to the IRB board to include four new measures to collect the necessary data for this portion of the study. If approved, the present researcher will recruit in two different ways. First, researchers will contact the families who have previously participated by telephone, explain the new questionnaires and the purpose of the study, and ask participants if they would be interested in participation. Second, researchers will visit the home of families with whom they are currently working as part of the previously described bilingualism study. They will explain the nature of the new questionnaires now included in the protocol, and confirm the family's continued interest in participation. This proposed segment will be presented as a fourth session in addition to the first three sessions that focused on bilingualism, mental health, and coping with stress.

Although the design of the first three sessions of the bilingualism study is longitudinal in nature, the purpose and questions of this proposed fourth session does not necessarily relate to the same questions that we sought to answer in the first three sessions. Therefore, the only data we will use from the first sessions is from the demographic questionnaire that contains data about certain control variables—variables that will have remained constant regardless of the amount of time passed from their original collection (i.e., parental educational attainment, gender, generational status). This T4 data collection point will take place 12-18 months after the T3 time point. Given the elapse in time from the original three sessions, we will ask for students' grade level, given its potential to confound the outcome of academic identity (Eccles 2009).

If a significant number of participants at the charter schools decline to participate in this fourth time point in the study, the researcher will use data from the previous demographic

questionnaire to examine their characteristics across multiple variables (i.e., SES; relocation status, etc.). I will then compare these demographic variables to the demographic variables of the participants who decided to participate in this segment of the study, and review if there are notable background variables that may have influenced potential participants' decisions to refrain from this time-4 participation.

Data collection. We will contact participants either over the phone or in person. We will read the questionnaires in their entirety. The researchers will make sure to read at a pace that is brisk, yet allows the participant sufficient time to think carefully about the questions. We will randomize the sequence of the four questionnaires to reduce any type of priming effect across the participants. After we have read all four questionnaires, we will thank the participants for their participation.

Measures

Academic Identity – Belonging. I will use the Identification with School Questionnaire (ISQ; Voelkl, 1997) to examine how Latino students view themselves in relation to academics in terms of belonging and sense of connection. Participants are asked to respond using a 5-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, to 5 = strongly agree) to a total of 16-questions. The scale works best as a unidimensional instrument that measures identification with school as a construct composed of questions about social belonging (i.e., "I feel proud of being part of my school"; "People at school are interested in what I have to say"), and attitudes about school related outcomes (i.e., "School is one of the most important things in my life"). Internal consistency is *0.81* and has been validated with ethnic minority youth, including Latinx adolescents.

Academic Identity – Value. I will use the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire

(MSLQ; Pintrich & De Groot, 1990) to measure the intrinsic value the students express towards academics. The 8-item-scale has a five-point-range that asks about level of agreement about multiple components of academic achievement. The scale has been validated on adolescents. The scale asks questions about perceived importance of work (i.e., "It is important for me to learn what is being taught in class"); intrinsic interest (i.e., "I think what we are learning in class is interesting"), and perceived utility (i.e., "I think that what I am learning in class is useful for me to know."). The scale has a Cronbach's alpha of .82.

Parental Academic Socialization. I will use the Parental Academic Socialization Questionnaire (PASQ, Suizzo and Soon, 2006) to measure level of parental socialization. It has been validated with both younger and older populations. The scale has a five-point-range that asks about the frequency of certain parental behaviors from *never* to *very often.* The questionnaire contains three subscales: 1) *providing an environment for learning* (i.e., "My parents ask me if I need supplies to do my homework"; alpha = .91); 2) *communicating messages about the importance of hard work* (i.e., "My parents explain that effort is the key to success; i.e., alpha of .90); 3) *communicating messages about the importance of school success* (i.e., "My parents expect me to get good grades in school"; alpha of .86). The measure is made up of a total of 26 items.

Teacher Support. I will use the Teacher Social and Academic support subscales of the Classroom Life Measure (Johnson, Johnson, Buckman, & Ruchards, 1985) to measure teacher academic support, specifically taking into consideration the aforementioned concept of pedagogical caring. The subscales have a five-point-range and ask about perceived support for learning from never to always. A sample item of the 4-item Social Support Scale is "My teacher really cares about me." A sample item of the 4-item Academic Support Scale is "My teacher

cares about how much I learn." Students will be instructed to answer the items with their teachers in general in mind, rather than with a specific teacher. Prior studies have reported Cronbach's alphas at at .89 and .91. Due to the scores being highly correlative, a composite score across all subscales will be used (Wentzel, 1997).

Demographics. I will use a demographic form that asks questions about age, gender, grade level, ethnicity/age, generational status, and parents' previous educational attainment. I will control for the previously mentioned variables during the analysis in order to examine the relationship between parental socialization and academic identity.

Statistical Analysis

Hypotheses

1. Higher parental academic support, as indicated by higher scores on the PASQ, will be positively associated with academic identity – belonging, as indicated with higher scores on the ISQ.
2. Higher parental academic support, as indicated by higher scores on the PASQ, will be positively associated with academic identity- values, as indicated by higher scores on the MSLQ.
3. Higher teacher support, as indicated by higher scores on the Teacher Social and Academic subscales, will be positively associated academic identity – belonging, as indicated with higher scores on the ISQ.

4. Higher teacher support, as indicated by higher scores on the Teacher Social and Academic subscales, will be positively associated with academic identity – values, as indicated with higher scores measured by the MSLQ.

5. Parental academic socialization (PASQ) and Teacher Support will be related to academic identity–belonging even after I control for the effects of gender, grade level, generational status, and parents' previous educational attainment. Additionally, the combination of parental academic socialization with that of teacher support will explain more of the variance on academic identity – belonging other than teacher support alone or parental socialization alone.

Preliminary analyses, correlations, and regression analysis. I will calculate descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) for all four measures. I will check assumptions for the correlational and regressional analysis, and check the data for outliers and to assess normality. Specifically, scatterplots will be used to assess linearity. Residual plots will be used to examine any violations of normality and homoscedasticity. In addition, I will test the data for multicollinearity.

First I will run descriptive analysis in the form of correlations between academic identity-belonging, academic identity- values, parental academic socialization and teacher support to determine whether certain predictor variables (i.e., sources of support/socialization from adults in Latinx students' lives) and different dimensions of academic identity (i.e., belonging; values) are related in this sample.

Then, to examine the relationship between parental socialization and academic belonging while controlling for relevant demographic variables, I will run a regression model in three steps. In step 1, I will regress academic identity-belonging on all the control variables (i.e., parental

level of education, gender, grade level, generational status). In step 2, I will add teacher support to the list of predictors while I control for all control variables. Then in step 3, I will add PAS as a predictor variable to the analysis. To assess whether the combination of parental socialization and teacher support explains the variance in academic identity – belonging over that of only one source of support, I will compare the change in R^2 from step 2 to step 3.

Bonferroni analysis. Due to testing four hypotheses during the correlational analysis, I will use a Bonferroni correction to reduce the probability of committing a Type-1 error. Whenever multiple hypotheses are tested, the probability of a significant result increases with each test. In order, then, to control for error rate, the Bonferroni procedure will calculate a new pair-wise alpha to keep the family-wise alpha at 0.05. The following equation will be used:

$0.05 / 4 = .0125$

Power analysis I conducted a power analysis using G* Power software to determine the number of participants required to detect significant results. A power analysis for finding a significant R^2 change requires 55 participants to obtain a moderate effect size ($f^2 = 0.26$) at a 0.80 level of power and an alpha of 0.0125 with 2 predictor variables, and 4 control variables. The effect size used here was modeled after a similar study that worked with a similar age population, a group of Latinx adolescent students, also interested in parental socialization and psycho-educational variables related to academic identity (Ceballo, Maurizi, Suarez & Aretakis, 2013).

I also conducted a power analysis to determine the number of participants required to detect significant results for hypotheses that used correlational analysis. A power analysis for finding a significant correlation requires 70 participants to obtain a one-tailed correlation of 0.36

at a 0.80 level of power and an alpha of 0.0125. The correlation here was modeled after the study mentioned above.

Discussion

Summary of study proposal

Latinx students lag behind other students in many areas of academic achievement, across multiple grade levels and ages, as well as rates of college completion when compared to certain other ethnic groups. One variable that has been shown to predict academic achievement in a meaningful way is that of academic identity. Moreover, this concept has been shown to be especially useful to predict academic achievement in Latinx students when conceptualized with a culturally-relevant component of social belonging (Matthews, Banerjee, 2014). Although the current public-school system of education has not able to respond to the cultural needs of Latinx students and enhance a healthy state of academic identity, many high commitment charter schools have emerged to create environments of teacher support that build Latinx students' academic identity. In addition, given the role of Latinx parents in the formation of Latinx adolescents' lifelong identity, a measure of Latinx parental socialization should be included in the analysis to obtain a more complete understanding of what predicts academic identity. Ultimately, an understanding of the potentially significant relationships between teacher support, parental academic socialization, and dimensions of academic identity will further our cultural understandings about the microsystemic agents in the lives of Latinx students who can increase their academic identity.

Implications of study

Implications for clinicians. Should the proposed study transition from stage of proposal to stage of data collection, our current understanding of the Latinx student can be furthered in a number of ways. First, it will provide added insight into the area of the Latinx identity, specifically how Latinx academic identity is related to the student-perception of the adults who provide guidance in their life. More clarity in this area is helpful because the data can then

inform helping professionals who work with Latinx students to know whether the combined support provided by parents and teachers can significantly predicts students' sense of academic identity. In a society that finds its Latinx population growing rapidly while rates of academic achievement fail to grow at the same pace (Valencia 1993), more research is needed to understand the relationships that can help Latinx adolescents see themselves as part of academic systems.

Implications for researchers. Second, the findings from such a study would provide in depth information on a population that has been understudied: the systems that operate within a charter school that serves Latinx students. For example, while there have been a number of studies that have looked at academic identity, parental socialization processes, and how teacher support affects academic achievement, there is to date no study that has looked at all three factors quantitatively in a sample of Latinx students who attend a high commitment charter school. To gain a better understanding of this population will further the literature base and provide more information that focuses on immigrant students of a low socioeconomic status.

Also, a study that examines these specific variables from this population can provide steps to later elucidate how effective charter school teachers are in their ability to develop the academic identity of the Latinx students with whom they work. Since the question has been raised about the methods through which charter schools recruit potential Latinx students (Blum 2015), the proposed study can help to explain whether or not there is more variance explained in academic identity when parental socialization and teacher supports are combined.

Ultimately, these findings can shed light on how related the parental socialization practices are on how charter school students view themselves, and ultimately lend researchers and clinicians with a greater knowledge of the role of teachers and parental guardians.

Strengths and Limitations

As with any proposal, the study described here holds a combination of limitations and strengths. First, due to the non-experimental nature of the study, it is not entirely possible to determine explicit causality or to identify the active mechanism by which academic identity is actually being shaped. That is to say, in lieu of a randomization process or control group, we cannot with certainty state that either teachers or parents are the factors that enhance academic identity within the Latinx adolescents in our sample. However, even if causality cannot be determined, to identify the strength of the relationship is still an important step for us to take. If the study can establish a link between academic identity and parental socialization or teacher support, it will provide future experimenters with a foundation to further test out the extent to which one of the hypothesized independent variables (i.e., PAS; Teacher Support) can affect a student's self-reported sense of academic belonging.

Another limitation to this proposed study is that, due to the shortage of time and resources, the proposed study can only focus on self-reports by students and cannot include reports from teachers or parents. In other words, we are only able to capture a measure of the subjective experience of the Latinx student in question, and are not able to compare this relationship with a measure from a different respondent to indicate how parents and teachers feel the contribute to these processes. However, due to the intrapersonal nature of academic identity, our main interest remains primarily centered on the personal experiences of the Latinx adolescents in question and the conscious impact that individuals from their representative microsystems have had on their lives. Therefore, the data we collect from the sample will help to answer the questions to which we are most interested in finding an answer.

Finally, due to the focus of the proposed study being primarily on a specific sample of Latinx charter school students who come from low-income, working class communities, we will

not be able to externalize the findings of the study to populations of other Latinx adolescents who study at a private or public school setting or who have different socioeconomic statuses. However, while at first blush this may appear to significantly limit what can be extrapolated from our findings or to explain processes within the Latinx academic community, we actually feel that the information from this specific population will still provide novel insight about the lives of Latinx students raised by a specific group of charter school Latinx parent and teachers. Indeed, the data we collect through this study with this sample may help further the field's understanding about the level of impact that certain agents have on the lives of Latinx students and their relationship to academics within charter systems.

In closing, at the end of their meta-analysis on parental involvement in middle school, Hill and Tyson (2009) write, "Given current demographic trends that predict that Latinos will become the largest ethnic minority group in the United States, it is imperative that psychologists conduct research to understand how Latino families and schools work together most productively" (p.760). That demographic reality is here—with Latinx Americans now being the largest ethnic minority group (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). As part of a team of Latin American researchers and psychologists-in-training, I hope the study proposed here, as well as future studies, will help illuminate the key relationships in the lives of Latinx students' to help develop their academic identities in a positive way.

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